

Knightshayes Access Statement

A large Victorian country estate in rural mid Devon, showcasing the eccentric design work of William Burges. Home to the only 'Garden in a Wood' in existence and one of the finest spring gardens in the South West, along with a fully restored kitchen garden, extensive woodland and parkland.

Please note changes have been highlighted in yellow. Last updated 29 May 2023.

Contact details

National Trust Knightshayes, Bolham, Tiverton, Devon EX16 7RQ

01884 254665

In the case of an emergency, please call 07767 318129

Knightshayes@nationaltrust.org.uk

Points to note

- There is reasonable mobile phone reception across most of the site except within the house and stables.
- Guide dogs are welcome throughout the site. We do ask that **all** guide and assistance dogs are easily identifiable by a harness, jacket or tag on their lead.
- There are water bowls in the plant shop and the stable courtyard which are refilled regularly or can be filled on request.
- Light levels in the house are kept low to protect the collection. This is compounded by the fact Knightshayes is a Victorian property, so the interior decoration of the house is naturally dark, and light levels are very low even in the summer.
- There are 2 manual wheelchairs available to loan from visitor reception for use in the gardens and grounds. Please call 01884 257381 to request these in advance where possible so we can have them sanitised and ready for use.
- There are further 2 manual wheelchairs available for loan from the Great Hall in the house for use inside. We request visitors swap from outdoor into indoor wheelchairs if accessing the house. Please request these in advance where possible so we can have them sanitised and ready for use.
- The parkland and gardens are on gradient which means there are a number of steep slopes and paths.
- A step free route around the formal garden is marked on our welcome map.
- There is 1 fenced pond and 1 unfenced pond in the parkland. There are a further three unfenced ponds in the gardens.

Arrival & Parking Facilities

- There are brown signs from the A361. The entrance is signed, and the main car park is located behind the stables, further up the driveway from the house.

- There are speed bumps approximately 1.5 cm high on the driveway between the house and the stables.
- Do not follow sat nav when visiting the property as this will direct you to a locked barrier. Please use postcode EX16 7RH for Sat nav and follow the brown tourist signs from Tiverton
- The main car park surface is hard core and disable parking is partially marked.
- From the nearest accessible parking spot in the car park to visitor reception is approximately 40 meters.
- There is a large parking area in the bottom level of the car park for those with access issues, though not exclusively for blue badge holders.
- This parking area is flat on one side and sloped - with an average slope of 7 degrees on the other side.
- This area is the shortest distance from the visitor reception.
- The surface of the car park is rough and uneven in places. It can be muddy following wet weather.
- Cycle racks are available near the parking meter at the bottom of the car park.
- It is possible to arrange to drop off visitors directly down at the house, if the designated spaces are full, by prior arrangement with the visitor reception team.
- There is a buggy service that can carry up to five passengers plus the driver and has space for a wheelchair via a metal ramp. The buggy runs between the house and the lower area of the main car park, with additional drop off stops at the front of the stables and near the Kitchen Walled Garden.
- The buggy only runs when volunteers are available, please call before your visit to check. There is a drop off point close to the house and formal gardens.
- There is another car park available in the parkland, adjacent to the Heathcoat Cricket club near the main entrance to Knightshayes. This is a flat car park with a gravelled surface. This car park is not lit.

WCs

- There are WCs in the stables, including a right-hand transfer accessible WC. There are no adult changing facilities but baby changing facilities are available here. All the WCs have automatic hand driers, lino and plastic wall surfaces, with fluorescent lights.
- There are more toilets opposite the front of the house, with accessible WCs in both the ladies and gentlemen's WCs.
- There is baby changing available in the ladies and disabled toilet at the stables, and in the ladies opposite the house.

Visitor Reception

- Visitor reception is in a wooden building next to the car park and adjacent to the main Stables.
- The entrance is through a double door which is approximately 66" (168cm) wide, though usually only one door is kept open. Staff and volunteers can assist with opening the door if required.

- The floor through the Stables is made of uneven cobbles, stone and brick, there is a runner in place. The flooring in visitor reception area is mostly stone, with large windows to provide natural light. Fluorescent lighting is used in the winter.
- The reception desk is approx. 36" (91cm) high.
- There is a hearing loop fitted at the till point.
- There is a level route through the plant centre for wheelchairs unable to manage going over the floor in reception. This has a gravel top.
- There are two wheelchairs available to loan from reception- if you would like to reserve one for your visit, please email knights Hayes@nationaltrust.org.uk or call 01884 257381

Shop

- Entrance to the shop is via the Stables Courtyard
- The doorway is wide enough to accommodate a standard wheelchair width.
- The counter is 36" (92cm) high but staff and volunteers are able to assist with service here and with lifting and carrying goods if required.
- There is circulation space between the tables of around 1200mm and some of the goods on the central tables are reachable by wheelchair users and children. There is space here to use a powered mobility vehicle or powered wheelchair.
- There is a hearing loop fitted at the till point.

Second-hand bookshop

- Is in the north west corner of the stables building made up of two rooms.
- There are temporary ramps at each entrance door for access. The doors can accommodate a standard wheelchair width.
- The flooring is wooden with a rug in the centre of each room. The rugs are tacked to the floor.
- The walls in the first room are clad in wood and are plaster in the second room.
- There are tables in the centre of the rooms, 2 armchairs in the first room and four Ikea chairs in the second room.
- The lighting is a mix of natural light and both track lighting and pendant lights are in each room with LED lightbulbs.

Stables Café

- Currently open 10am-5pm
- The main Café servery has step-free access from the stables courtyard, via a doorway, which is over 100cm (1m) wide. The door opens outwards and is manually opened. There is a slight lip on entry. There is another, narrower entrance into the seating area which has a raised lip that is ramped, with moveable wooden ramps.
- There is some outdoor seating with tables at the front of the stables which can accommodate wheelchair users.
- There is limited indoor seating. Please place your order before taking a table- this means we can ensure tables are clean between use.

- The counter is 40" (102cm) high. Catering team members are available to assist with service and carrying trays.
- There is a hearing loop fitted at the till point
- There is large, handled cutlery and straws available.
- The floor and wall surfaces are stone and brick, and the lighting is fluorescent. The chairs have cushioned seats. There are highchairs available.
- The walls are made from brick with wooden panelling on the lower 6ft.
- Lighting levels are quite low in the seating area. It is wise to take a moment to allow your eyes to adjust to the low light levels.
- The floor in the seating area dips in the middle towards a drain.
- The stables courtyard is cobbled and sloped towards a drain in the centre.
- If you have any allergies or intolerances, please speak to a member of staff who can run through our allergens checklist and can help accommodate your requirements.

Route to the house and gardens

- There is a gravel/tarmac path from the front of the stables leading to the house. There are slight bumps in this path due to tree roots.
- The path down to the kitchen garden on the right has an approximate gradient of 1:8 and runs from the stables lawn. The route is about 50 metres.
- The path towards the house and formal and woodland garden is approximately 100 metres long and takes around 5 minutes at a moderate walking pace. It is a gentle slope with a gravel surface, and on a slight camber. There are benches located along this walk. The route is lined with trees which can create a 'dappled' effect on the path if the sun is out.
- The path towards the house crosses a vehicular traffic route. This driveway leads to a staff and volunteer car park and gives garden staff access to the back of the house for tractors and off-road garden vehicles. All staff and volunteers are aware they must restrict their speed in this area.

House

- The immediate forecourt in front of the house is only used by pedestrians. The forecourt is level and gravelled, the gravel is raked. There are a few potholes mainly to the left hand of the forecourt when coming from the drive and one in the middle of the forecourt.
- The entrance to the house is through the front door. There is a ramp fitted to allow access.
- At busy times there might be a queue and visitors will be asked to wait to enter.
- The floor surfaces are mostly carpeted, with a wooden floor in the Great Hall and some passages.
- The lighting is a mixture of fluorescent and LED and kept to a low level to maintain the atmosphere and to protect the collection.
- The ground floor route is fully available to wheelchair users in both manual and electric wheelchairs, though there are some pinch points in the house due to its layout which may make access a little difficult at time.

- We are unable to accommodate outdoors mobility vehicles and scooters (as opposed to electric wheelchairs) in the house due to restriction on space and the risk to the collection and floor surfaces. An indoor manual wheelchair will always be offered as an alternative.
- Rucksacks and large bags are required to be left in the entrance area in a cupboard which is monitored at all times.
- If you require use of a quiet space, please indicate this to one of our room guides who will be able to find a suitable area for you.
- The house is only open at weekends during winter months (November – February)

Formal and Woodland gardens

- There is access to the Formal and Woodland Garden via the red gate to the right of the house.
- There is a mixture of grass paths and gravel paths throughout the garden. All the gravel paths are made up of 6mm quartzite chip.
- There is a step free hard path throughout the garden that is suitable for wheelchairs and buggies (marked on map), but due to the nature of the landscape, the path is rarely flat, and is steep in places.
- Most areas in the garden are accessible via step free-routes.
- **Steps:**
There are steps in the following areas:
 - From the terraces down to the pond in front of the house: three sets:
 1. 9 x 178mm + 1 x 76mm, with handrails on both sides
 2. 6 x 178mm + 1 x 152mm, with handrails on both sides
 3. 7 x 178mm + 5 x 152mm, no handrails
 - From the terraces to the chase lawn: 6 x 178mm, with handrails on both sides. *This area is also accessible via a step free path from the terraces.*
 - Into the paved garden: 4 x 178mm, no handrails. *This area is also accessible via a step free path from the terraces.*
 - Into the pool garden: 4 x 178mm, no handrails. *This area is also accessible via a step free path through the paved garden.*
 - Up into the Garden in the Wood: three sets:
 1. 3 x 203mm, with handrails on both sides
 2. 3 x 203mm, with handrails on both sides
 3. 3 x 203mm + 1 x 51mm, with handrails on both sides. The bottom step is uneven and unmarked.*This area is also accessible via a step free path from the terraces.*
 - There are some further stepped areas throughout the Garden in the Wood leading off the main grass paths.
- The Formal Garden has 2 ponds, one located in the Pool Garden and another in front of the house. Both are unfenced. The paving around the pond in front of the house is uneven in places.
- There is a ha-ha at the bottom of the front lawn, which has a 6 foot (1.8m) drop into the field beyond, with only a small catch fence.

- There are a number of benches located throughout the garden.

The Kitchen Garden

- The main entrance into the kitchen garden is through a large, heavy iron gate, which is propped open. This opens outwards and is left open at all times, during opening hours.
- There is a second gate out towards the Douglas Fir walk. This opens outwards from the kitchen garden and is generally kept shut.
- The elevation of the kitchen garden means that it is on a slope to catch as much sun as possible, so there is a steep walk from the bottom to the top.
- The paths are all made of concrete and are wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair in all areas- though not for two to pass one another in most areas.
- There is 1 pond in the kitchen garden. It is unfenced.

Parkland and woodland

- There is a recommended route around the parkland and woodland, though much of it is unsurfaced, and the route passes through fields where livestock are likely to be present
- The path in the woodland is roughly surfaced, it is uneven and steep in places.
- All routes can be slippery and muddy at times.
- There is one fenced pond and one unfenced pond in the parkland.
- The path network throughout the parkland necessitates crossing the driveway at a couple of points. Please be aware there is two-way traffic using the driveway and it can be very busy.

Date

29 May 2023